

CMOH or POW Exemption for Surviving Spouse

New Information

Effective January 1, 2008, the **surviving spouse** of a former Congressional Medal of Honor (CMOH) or Prisoner of War (POW) plate owner may retain the special plates **and** the accompanying exemption from registration fees for one vehicle.

A family member (limited to the following; parent, step-parent, child, step-child, grandparent, step-grandparent, sibling, or step-sibling) may keep one plate as a family heirloom upon the death of the plate owner and the surviving spouse (if any). The fee exemption **is not** extended to family members.

Procedures for a Surviving Spouse

The surviving spouse retains all plate privileges, such as, plate reassignment, adding or deleting a co-owner, and replacing a lost plate. To retain the plates and fee exemption for the surviving spouse:

- Submit a Statement of Facts (REG 256) completed by the surviving spouse stating that he/she is the spouse of the former CMOH/POW plate owner and that he/she wishes to retain the plates.
- Include the Statement of Facts (REG 256) with normal application requirements for plate reassignment, adding or deleting a co-owner, or replacing a lost CMOH/POW plate.

Procedures for a Family Heirloom

The special plates must be removed from the vehicle and one plate surrendered to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) within 60 days of the death of the plate owner and surviving spouse (if any), or at time of renewal, whichever occurs first. To retain one plate as a family heirloom:

- The family member must complete a Statement of Facts (REG 256) stating the relationship to the former CMOH/POW plate holder and that he/she will not use the plates for registration purposes.
- Submit the Statement of Facts (REG 256) (completed by the family member) to DMV with the surrendered plate if the family is not keeping the vehicle.
- If the family member is keeping the vehicle, include the Statement of Facts (REG 256) (completed by the family member) with the normal substitute plate or transfer application requirements.

Note: CMOH/POW plates will not be made for family members as heirlooms.

Background

Previous to January 1, 2008, the surviving spouse was not entitled to retain the exemption from payment of all registration fees; and a CMOH or POW plate could not be kept by a family member as an heirloom.

Reference

Vehicle Code §§5101.5, 5010.6

Distribution

Notification that this memo is available online at www.dmv.ca.gov under Publications was made via E-Mail Alert in December 2007.

Contact

Call the DMV Customer Communications Section at (916) 657-6560 for further clarification of this memo. Upon request, this document can be produced in Braille or large print.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Rose". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'K' and 'R'.

KATHLEEN ROSE, Deputy Director
Communication Programs Division